



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN 509699

DfES Number: 516687

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	26/01/2004
Inspector Name	Amanda Jane Tyson

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	St Mary Magdalen Montessori Nursery School
Setting Address	61 North Worple Way Mortlake London SW14 8PR

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Miss Elizabeth Jean Maitland
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ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

St. Mary Magdalene Montessori Nursery School opened under the present owner in 2000. It operates from three rooms in a church hall in Mortlake. The nursery school serves the local area.

The group are registered for 37 children aged between two and a half to five years. There are currently 37 children, aged from two to five years on roll. This includes 8 funded three-year-olds and 10 funded four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group currently support two children who speak English as an additional language. Children with special educational needs are welcomed and supported, although there are no children currently on role.

The school opens five days a week during term time. Sessions are from 9.15 to 12.15 pm, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and from 9.15 to 14.45pm on Thursdays.

Eleven full and part-time staff are employed to work with the children. Of these, eight hold early years and Montessori teaching qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDPC). The school uses Montessori teaching methods alongside traditional methods.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

St Mary Magdalen Montessori Nursery School provides a high quality learning environment where children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

The children confidently try new skills, they are independent, inquisitive and motivated to learn. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and are kind and considerate towards each other. The children use language articulately to express their feelings, interact and negotiate with others and are developing very good pre-reading and writing skills. The children are becoming confident mathematicians, they count to high numbers, recognise numerals and are beginning to skilfully calculate. Their knowledge and understanding of complex shapes is exemplary. The children play imaginatively, acting out real and imaginary experiences and explore and create their own designs with enthusiasm.

The quality of teaching is a key strength. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to incorporate objectives for children's learning into all activities and routines. They plan an exciting range of activities and are skilled in their interactions with the children. The staff have high expectations of the children and make generally very good use of their developmental assessments to ensure that they are sufficiently challenged and continue to progress in all learning areas. Resources are of high quality and are well organised so that children can help themselves, although the outdoor play area is small.

Leadership and management is very good. Staff are supported to develop their skills and experience through training and an appraisal system. They are effectively deployed, according to their skills and experience and there is a consistent commitment to evaluate the provision and improve further.

The parents are extremely supportive of the nursery. They are kept very well informed of children's development and are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning and nursery activities.

What is being done well?

- The quality of teaching is excellent. Staff foster the children's interest and extend their learning in all activities and routines with creative and imaginative techniques and resources. The curriculum plans, both long and short term are clear and evaluative and children's developmental assessments detail their progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are kept fully informed and included in their child's learning, they have a clear understanding of the groups teaching methods.
- The children are interested and motivated to learn, are very confident and have high levels of concentration.

- The children are confident mathematicians. They count to high numbers, recognise numerals, calculate well and are developing their knowledge of complex shapes, i.e. sphere, cuboid and cylinder.
- The children use their imagination well and integrate their learning in role play.
- The children use language articulately to express their feelings, imagination and past and present events. They are developing very good writing skills, recognise letters, some simple words and know that print carries meaning.
- The children play well together, they have a very good understanding of right and wrong and are helpful and considerate towards each other, which is fostered by staff's consistent and positive approach to behaviour management.

What needs to be improved?

- Assessment records, to include details of the objectives for children's individual next stage of development.
- Out door play space.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The new proprietor has addressed all of the key issues from the last inspection.

Each child is allocated to a key member of staff who takes responsibility for maintaining clear progress records and assessments which are linked to the six areas of learning and are monitored by the manager. These records could be improved further by the inclusion of objectives for children's next stage of development. Parents are invited to view these records and discuss their child's progress on a regular basis and they have a good understanding of the curriculum and it's objectives.

The curriculum plans include many different opportunities for children to develop physically. The children participate in music and movement, ballet, balancing, climbing and running and do so with skill and confidence.

The children use the computer with confidence and skill. They know how to operate simple programmes and use the mouse. In addition there are many other opportunities for children to use programmable toys and equipment.

There is an on going training programme, staff are encouraged to update their knowledge and experience and further their qualifications. They receive a good level of management support through weekly team meetings and an effective appraisal system.

Staff are skilled in seizing opportunities to encourage and promote linking letter

sounds with patterns in rhymes and words. The Montessori teaching methods promote this well with lots of innovative resources. Many children have moved on to the next stage and are beginning to link two letters together to form a word.

The curriculum plans include excellent activities and learning objectives to develop children's knowledge and understanding of different cultures and beliefs.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children make very good progress in this area. They have high levels of independence and concentration. They are inquisitive, excited and motivated to extend their learning and are confident to try new skills and activities. The children play very well together, have a very good understanding of right and wrong and are kind and considerate of each others needs and differences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in this area. The children initiate conversations, ask questions and use language to express their thoughts and feelings. They write and recognise letters, link sounds to letter names and are beginning to recognise simple words. The children enjoy books and participate whole heartedly in group story time and they understand that print carries meaning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in this area. They count to high numbers, well over 10 and use number language with growing confidence. The children write and recognise numerals to 10 and above, depending on age. Many children are also developing a very good understanding of number combinations and early calculating skills. They can name complex shapes and use their developing mathematical ideas to solve practical problems, such as position, weight, measure and balance.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in this area. They are interested in the world they live in, which is fostered by the interesting and worthwhile topics that are planned by staff. The children are inquisitive, they ask questions and explore imaginatively in play using their newly acquired learning. They have a good understanding of past and present and are enthusiastic to share their news. The children build and construct with a purpose and use technology resources with confidence.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are making very good progress in this area. Their confidence and skill in music and movement activities is particularly good, as is their developing understanding of how the body works. Children can name internal body organs, recognise certain bones and have a good understanding of the importance of staying healthy. The children move with good co-ordination and they run, jump, climb and balance well. They have good fine motor skills and use small tools with skill.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children are making very good progress in this area. They enjoy learning to use musical instruments and are developing their understanding of beat and rhythm. The children listen to a variety of different types of music and sing a wide range of songs from memory. The children have excellent imaginative skills and act out real and imaginary experiences in detail. The confidently create their own designs, explore and choose colours for a purpose.	

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration could be given to the following:
- Improve the current system for recording children's progress to include objectives for children's next stage of development.
- Develop the outdoor area to provide more play space.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.